



Proclamation

In Recognition of

Pacific War Heroes Day

WHEREAS, the United States of America entered World War II after the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 until Imperial Japan signed the Instrument of Surrender on September 2, 1945; and

WHEREAS, the Pacific War refers to the theater of World War II fought in the Pacific and Asia; and

WHEREAS, in April and May of 1942, the surrender of U.S.-Philippine forces to Imperial Japan resulted in thousands of Prisoners of War (POW); and

WHEREAS, American and Allied POWs were transported on Japanese freighters and ocean liners known as “hellships” to Japan and territories occupied by Imperial Japan to serve as slave labor; and

WHEREAS, on December 14-15, 1944, planes from the carrier USS *Hornet* bombed the unmarked *Oryoku Maru* in Subic Bay, causing over 200 deaths in addition to the nearly 70 that died from suffocation and heat exhaustion; and

WHEREAS, POW survivors of the destroyed *Oryoku Maru* were put aboard the *Enoura Maru* and *Brazil Maru* to continue the voyage from the Philippines to Japan; and

WHEREAS, on January 9, 1945, planes from the carrier USS *Hornet* bombed the *Enoura Maru*, which was docked in Takao Harbor, Formosa, resulting in over 300 deaths; and

WHEREAS, the bodies of 400 men who died on the *Enoura Maru* and *Brazil Maru* while in Takao Harbor were placed in a mass grave on Formosa; and

WHEREAS, after the war, the bodies in Taiwan (formerly Formosa) were exhumed by a U.S. military reclamation team and subsequently interred in 20 graves on Hawai'i, containing multiple sets of co-mingled remains marked “Unknowns, January 9, 1945” at what is now known as the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific; and

WHEREAS, less than 600 of the original 1,600 men from the *Oryoku Maru* eventually arrived in Japan in February 1945, and barely 400 or 25 percent survived the war; and


WHEREAS, on August 15, 2018, the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor Memorial Society and the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society dedicates a memorial stone at the National Cemetery of the Pacific in memory of the American and Allied POWs who died in Takao Harbor;


THEREFORE I, DAVID Y. IGE, Governor, and I, DOUGLAS S. CHIN, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim August 15, 2018 as

“PACIFIC WAR HEROES DAY”

in Hawai'i and ask the people of the Aloha State to join us in honoring those who served in the Pacific War theater with strength and courage.

Done at the State Capitol, in Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this twenty-fourth day of July 2018.


DAVID Y. IGE
Governor, State of Hawai'i


DOUGLAS S. CHIN
Lt. Governor, State of Hawai'i